

***Act Designates April 26<sup>th</sup> to May 2<sup>nd</sup> As National Crime Victims' Rights Week***

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, Congressman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) and Congressman Ted Poe (R-TX) announced that House Resolution 109, the National Crime Victims' Rights Week Act of 2009 passed the House by a vote of 422 to 0. This act designates the week of April 26<sup>th</sup> as National Crime Victims' Rights Week to increase public awareness of the rights, needs, and concerns of victims and survivors of crime in the United States. It also celebrates the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the enactment of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984.

"Crime victims are our sons, daughters, and our friends and neighbors," said Costa. "When they are in need of assistance after a crime, they should not be met with a closed door, but open arms. This year, we mark the 25th anniversary of the enactment of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984, better known as VOCA. This legislation has supported rights and services for crime victims for the last 25 years, and has done it without the use of a single dime from the American taxpayer."

"During the 25th anniversary of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, community leaders and organizations recognize the importance of victims' rights," said Poe. "The week honors both crime victims and the individuals who advocate for them every day. This year's anniversary is especially important as it serves as a reminder that it is the same United States Constitution that protects the rights of offenders that also protects the rights of victims. Without justice for victims, we do not have justice at all."

As co-chairmen and co-founders of the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus, Costa and Poe have been leaders in bringing the issue of crime victims' rights to the forefront in Congress. The Caucus has been successful in authoring legislation and amendments to help bring more debate to the issue, as well as protecting the Victims of Crime Act fund and the Violence Against Women Act from being raided by the Administration.

